REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 6 was objected to because of an informality. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Behnke et al. (US 5,863,367). Claims 10, 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Behnke et al. in view of Fromson et al. (US 6,062,138). Claim 6 has been amended to correct an informality. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to clarify the term "carrier sleeve layer." Claims 15, 16 18 and 19 have been canceled without prejudice.

New claims 20 to 24 have been added. Claims 21 to 23 correspond to previous allowable claims 6, 8 and 9.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 12 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Behnke et al. (US 5,863,367).

Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to clarify that the carrier sleeve layer is a rigid layer for supporting the tubular shape of the blanket, as described for example at [0025].

Behnke does not show such a carrier sleeve layer.

Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) to claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 12 and 13 is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejections

Claims 10, 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Behnke et al. in view of Fromson et al. (US 6,062,138).

Withdrawal of the rejection to claims 10, 11 and 14 is respectfully requested in view of the comments with respect to claims 1 and 12.

Withdrawn Claims 3 and 17

Reinstatement and allowance of withdrawn dependent claims 3 and 17 is respectfully requested.

New Claims 20 to 24

Claim 20 recites a printing blanket comprising: a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface, the carrier sleeve layer being an innermost layer of the printing blanket; and a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer. Support is found in Fig. 2A and the related description for example. Behnke does not disclose a printing blanket with an innermost layer having an axially convex surface.

Claim 21 recites a printing blanket comprising: a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface; and a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer; wherein an outer surface of the print layer has a convex axial profile when the blanket is disposed on a blanket cylinder without pressure. Support is found in Fig. 2B for example and the related description. Behnke does not disclose a printing blanket with an outer surface having a convex axial profile when the blanket in not under pressure.

Claim 22 recites a printing blanket comprising: a carrier sleeve layer having at least one axially convex surface; and a print layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer; and a compressible layer disposed between the carrier sleeve layer and the print layer. Support is found in Fig. 2A for example. Behnke does not disclose a carrier sleeve layer having an axially convex surface and a compressible layer disposed over the carrier sleeve layer with an axially convex surface. Claims 23 and 24 depend from claim 22 and are respectfully submitted as patentable for the same reason.

CONCLUSION

The present application is respectfully submitted as being in condition for allowance and applicants respectfully request such action.

Respectfully submitted,
DAVIDSON, DAVIDSON & KAPPEL, LLC

By: _____
William C. Gehris
Reg. No. 38,156

Davidson, Davidson & Kappel, LLC
485 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10018
(212) 736-1940